



Positive Customer Experiences - Use 'Em



Experiences, real experiences; That's what we want to hear.

The response to "Trust is The Midas Touch" indicated I'd struck a nerve in the sales fabric so I decided to share some ideas on how to build or rebuild that trust factor.

First a little background to set the stage.

There is little doubt that the trust in big corporations has fallen to an all-time low. In fact, the Edelman Trust Barometer surveyed consumers in 20 countries and found that 62% of those surveyed said they trust companies less now than a year ago. Further, consumer trust in advertising has decreased substantially in the last 5 years. (Over a 50% decline according to Elkin/Insight Express) It begs the question, "how can I inspire trust in this current credibility crisis?"

The bright side is, new Golin/Harris/InsightExpress research indicates that 83% of those surveyed agreed that they are more likely to give a company they trust the benefit of the doubt and listen to their side before jumping to conclusions.

Skepticism reins supreme and serves to hammer home the idea that people like to do business with people they like and trust.

Many of you purchase books or products online and as you know with the cost of a book today it's a challenge to be fairly certain that you're not buying a lemon. How do you vet your purchases? You go to Amazon.com reviews to see what others have to say about what's going in your shopping cart. Likewise if you are considering an eBay purchase, you routinely check eBay feedback for, well, feedback or anecdotes from satisfied customers. Even the local TV channels feature "as seen on TV" to give viewers real poop on an item they may be considering.

Here are 7 ways to use Positive Customer Experiences:

- 1. Sales conversations:** We tend to listen closely when someone tells us a story. We like stories and hearing about positive customer experiences is a great story to tell.
- 2. Your Website:** Lets face it, your site is your location today and the first place prospects can discreetly check you out. Post a positive customer experience. (Think eBay)
- 3.** If you have a company e-zine or newsletter, use it to relate success stories to your prospects and current customers.
- 4.** Next time you're working an event or trade show, invite happy customers to tell their stories. Or use storyboards featuring positive customer experiences.
- 5.** As part of sales training, teach reps to get excited about customer success stories that they can relate to prospects.
- 6.** When you are relegated to leaving a voice mail message. Don't waste it with "hi, this is Willy Loman blah, blah, blah". Relate a short success story and mention a specific customer who is happy and trusts you.

And finally;

- 7.** Showcase a positive customer experience in an upcoming ad that may be featured in a key industry publication; or if you are an advertising sales rep, get your sales manager to run success story ads in your paper or your sister publications. Make sure you identify the happy client.

People love stories. Use customer success stories to help build the trust level with your customers or new prospects.

Trust is the Midas Touch.

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